

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **TROOPERS PREPARE FOR FOURTH OF JULY TRAVEL**

#### ***Announce Pilot DUI Enforcement/Education Task Force***

MONTGOMERY — All available state troopers will be on duty during the Independence Day holiday period, according to Col. W.M. Coppage, Department of Public Safety director. Coppage said the increased trooper presence, coupled with an intensive enforcement effort, will promote roadway safety for holiday motorists.

Coppage also announced a pilot program developed by Montgomery Post troopers to deter drunken driving through sobriety checkpoints and safety awareness. Coppage said the department will study the impact of “Task Force Zero Tolerance for Impaired Drivers” to consider expansion of the pilot.

The 10-member Zero Tolerance task force is made up of the post’s top DUI enforcers. They will hold a sobriety checkpoint in Chilton County on July 4, and additional checkpoints are planned in the Montgomery Post area throughout the summer. In coming weeks, Task Force Zero members also will take part in safety education presentations in conjunction with Public Safety’s Public Information/Safety Education officers.

Coppage stressed the importance of driving with care and caution throughout the holiday period. He urged motorists to “buckle up on every trip, slow down and never drive while impaired by alcohol or drugs.”

During the Fourth of July holiday period troopers throughout Alabama will be watchful for traffic law violations, including impaired driving, speeding and failure to use safety belts and child restraints. Troopers will utilize LIDAR – laser speed detection devices – as part of their speed limit enforcement efforts. The portable LIDAR units are often used from a stationary location – like a bridge or overpass – and have proven extremely effective at detecting speed limit violators. DPS recently purchased additional LIDAR units for use statewide.

Troopers plan to focus patrols on heavily traveled roadways, including interstates and popular beach and vacation routes, in conjunction with Operation C.A.R.E. A cooperative effort by state police nationwide, C.A.R.E – Combined Accident Reduction Effort – seeks to promote traffic safety during holiday periods through enforcement and safety awareness.

The Department of Public Safety estimates that 16 people may die in traffic crashes in Alabama during the 78-hour Independence Day period beginning at 6 p.m. Friday, July 1, and ending at midnight Monday, July 4. Last year there were 10 fatalities during the 78-hour Fourth of July period. Five of the crash victims were not using safety belts, and at least one of the traffic deaths was alcohol related.

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